WHEN MOTHER LETS US ACT

STELLA G. S. PERRY

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THE PLAYER.

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By STELLA GEORGE STERN PERRY

ILLUSTRATED BY ADA BUDELL

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To

PERCIVAL CHUBB

Here's to the Elder Playmate who can lead a merry band,
Here's to the Youngest Teacher who can always understand,
Here's to the Constant Comrade who can take us by the hand
On pathways winding in and out The Little People's Land!

AN ELF.

I acted to-day the part of an Elf
  Who was ever so helpful and kind
And I liked it so much that I said to myself
  When the acting was done, "I will *be* like that
    Elf,
For it makes me so glad in my mind."

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Even when I close my eyes
Lovely things I see
There is always a surprise
'Way inside of me,—

Sometimes fairy people gay
Sometimes fields of flowers,
Sometimes children at their play,
Finer play than ours.

Splendid stories I can see
Just as if I read them;
Stirring words are said to me,
Though nobody said them.

There is just one rule I find
To make these treasures present,—
I must always keep my mind
Kind and good and pleasant.

INTRODUCTION

This is not a book for work, it is a book for play. There isn't a thing to "learn by heart" in it.

But I believe that we can learn more by having a good time than by any other plan, if we know how to go about it. And I am sure that we can grow wiser by "doing it all ourselves" than we can in any other way ever tried.

Then, when a group of you get together and feel like "playing acting," whether under the green trees or indoors on the rainy days,—or when you wish to make a play of your own to entertain your friends, as dear Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy used to do in "Little Women,"—or when a story seems so real to you that you want to act it out and be the people in it your own selves,—or when your minds want some merry exercise in charades and riddles,—or when the Spirit of Make Believe takes hold of you, and everything you have seen or heard of seems something you can be and do,—then you may be glad to have this book. For it will tell you how to Act, when Mother lets you.

PLAY YOUR PART WITH ALL YOUR HEART

I found out that even in your play
To do your very best is just the proper way;
Much more fun will come to you in pay.
I knew it paid to *work* your best. It does the
same in play.

WHAT YOU MUST ALWAYS DO

Here are some rules to help you in every kind of acting.

Forget Yourself.

The most important thing to remember is,—to forget yourself. Think first of the whole story or play—to act it out just as it acts itself out in your mind when you read it or think of it. Just let it live. Just live the story yourself.

Then think of the part you are taking. Understand and *be* that character. That is what we call "getting in the spirit" of the part, and anybody can play it well who does that. If you play Cinderella, for instance, you must remember that you are not Betty or Alice or Lucy or whatever name you usually go by, but *Cinderella,* a lonely little girl sitting among the ashes and longing for some fun.

This is equally true when you play less pleasant characters, like the giant that Jack killed or a dragon. Some of these dreadful creatures are the most fun of all when done in a spirit of play. But, anyway, when we think of the effect of the

whole play and not merely of our own part it will not make any difference to us whether we have a popular or unpopular character to act. It will be all part of the game.

All you have to remember is that *you yourself are not present at all and that your playmates are not present either.* They must be to you the parts they are playing, too. No one is present but the characters of the play.

You see, "playing acting" is only making believe, just as you always do in all your games. You are playing acting when you play "ladies" or "store" just the same as when you play Cinderella or Jack the Giant Killer. And whether you are playing alone or if friends or "grown-ups" are looking makes no difference.

Any child who can play any game can play acting and do it well.

Choose plays that you like to think of.

Choose plays or stories that you love. Choose tales that fill your hearts with beauty or good cheer, things that make life richer and better and brighter. Because you are sure to remember the things that you *do* much longer than the things you only read or hear. And, of course, you want the ever-and-ever remembered things to be good and strong and helpful and beautiful and true.

Keep sweet-tempered.

Of course, we all know that it is right and useful to be good-natured in every sort of work and play and that sweetness of temper is like a nice set of springs that make the little cart of life jog along smoothly and comfortably for ourselves and everybody else. But in acting, good nature is especially necessary, because so much can be injured and so many persons' fun spoiled by a very little bit of bad temper. For it throws us out of the spirit of the game; and sometimes it is hard to get it back again.

A child who is ready to do whatever comes along and do it merrily is half the success of the play.

If you keep good-natured and pleasant,
And never are cross and exacting,
You'll find that everyone present
Will be much more pleased with the acting.

PROPERTIES

Nurse says, "Next time you act a play
  Remember, if you can,
To put your playthings all away,"
  For *she won't* be the Property Man.

THINGS TO ACT WITH

Costumes.

The dressing up is, of course, part of the fun. But the fun does not depend upon it and the children who have the most fun acting are those who can "make anything do" or do without anything if need be.

For a good imagination can make a royal robe out of a gingham frock or a knight's helmet out of an old woolen cap.

However, almost every family has some discarded garments and trimmings that will do splendidly as stage costumes and if the children will have one place for these things and keep them in that place when they are not in use, they can surely collect a good stage wardrobe very soon.

Old cloaks and hats are particularly useful, as they can be twisted and turned into so many things. And the children who will ask at birthday or holiday time for a gift of crepe and tissue papers in various colors, with a few sheets of gold or silver kindergarten paper in the bundle,

can make costumes for any period of history or fable.

The crepe papers that can be pulled out and frilled and twisted without tearing are useful indeed and every child knows how to handle them.

When acting old stories or history plays, the pictures in the book will give a good idea of the effect to be made by the costumes. Fairy tales and scenes of to-day will need no guide.

You will enjoy best the costumes and "fixings" you make yourselves. If some of the girls are handy with needle and paint-brush and if some of the boys have learned enough in manual training class to make swords and staves and the like, you are lucky indeed.

But none of these things are really needed and you can do very well without them. The only necessary things are the actors themselves.

If you do dress up, you will find that your plays look better if you are as careful as you can be about color and do not put together colors that look ugly and destroy the "picture" you make to your audience. Any combinations that you find in nature are sure to be good.

Scenery.

Anywhere will do to play your little plays. If you can feel that you are the characters in the story, you can just as easily feel that the nursery is a palace or the back yard the Forest of Magic.

Indeed, when some of the greatest plays in the world were first played, long ago, all the scenery used was a little sign saying where the place was supposed to be.

But when you are giving a real play "before company" and want some scenes to help carry out the story, you will find it very easy to make them.

Screens can be borrowed from the household and covered as you please. For instance, brown paper on which pictures in paper frames are pasted, makes a good wall for an indoor scene. Sheets on which green-paper cut-out mountains or trees are pinned make "all out doors." And if you haven't screens, the clothes horse will do as well! What better palace can be suggested than a background of the drawing-room curtains, still hanging in their usual place with a handsome chair set before them?

I could go on making suggestions to you; but all you need to know is this. Make up your minds what effect you need. Then think of

what you absolutely must have to make that effect. You will be surprised to find how little that is. Do without everything else. Look over your material and discuss together how you can use it. Only make up your minds that *you can get that effect.* And do not be discouraged until you do. "Making things do" is one of the greatest pleasures when people find out how.

Curtain.

For nearly all of children's plays, especially those gotten up on the spur of the moment, just because we "feel like it," no curtain is needed. For those "company" plays that require a curtain, a grown person or older child can usually be found willing to hang it.

But you can have just as much fun without any curtain or scenery at all.

Properties.

All the things used in a play besides the actual costumes and the actual scene itself are called, on the real stage, "properties." And of these you may use as many or as few as you have at hand. A tin cup can be a royal goblet. Or the palm of a child's hand can do as well, if you "suit the action to the word." But if you care to cover a glass with silver foil and decorate it

with beads or dashes of paint,—well, there's fun in that too.

But a good imagination in all the little troupe is the best "stage property" you can have.

The Japanese people consider that actor the greatest who can do without the most, and still play his part well.

After all, scenery and properties are just things to play with.

The children like to hop and skip,—
We know they always will.
But these, you see, are statues
And that's why they keep so still.
Good statues never move at all;
But if these statues *should,*
Forgive—they're really children
And they've done the best they could!

STATUES

The simplest form of acting that children enjoy is Playing Statues.

It *is* a good game, because you can play it anywhere; it takes no preparation and any number of children can take part in it, from one to a whole party.

Everybody has seen statues. Everybody knows that they are works of art that keep in enduring form the deeds and the feelings of people and the figures of the world's heroes and heroines.

Of course you little folks can scarcely be expected to keep yourselves "in enduring form" very long. But you must determine that you will stand still as long as you possibly can, when you play statues. For that is part of the fun. And sometimes the child who laughs or wriggles —which no proper statue ever does—has to pay a forfeit.

It is the usual custom to choose a child to be the Exhibitor of the statues. The Exhibitor takes the others in turn, to be statues, while the waiting group form the public. Then when the

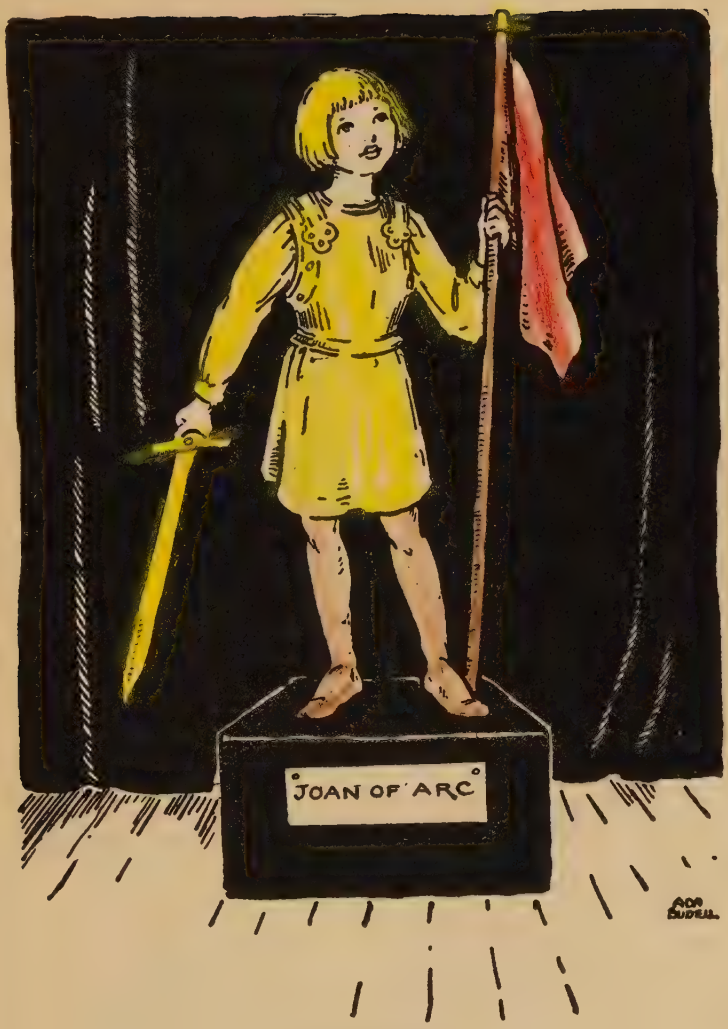
statue is ready, the Exhibitor announces its title. But it is not necessary to have an Exhibitor. And nobody minds if the statue announces its own title before falling into stony silence.

At a given signal, the tap of a bell, or a hand clap, or after a number is counted, the child who is to be the statue falls into position and must hold this position until another signal is given. Every child chooses the subject of his or her own statue.

Very little children like to choose for their parts very simple things like "Child Picking Flowers," "Kitten Washing its Face," "Mother Sewing," "Gardener Digging," "Butterfly Resting," "Baby Asleep," and some of these make the prettiest and most admired statues.

Children a little older like to show games and pastimes. Thoughts and feelings, like "Joy," "Fear," "Laughter" are well liked, too. But when you are big enough to delight in characters from the stories and from histories and poems, then you have the most fun playing statues.

Of course, statues can be made with more than one figure. Indeed, I think there is more fun in groups than in single figures. There is always more fun in things we do together than in things we do alone; don't you think so?



JOAN OF ARC

STATUES FOR COMPANY

When you have the statues at a "real party" for mother and her friends or for other children, it is better to show the statues one by one between the folding doors or behind a curtain. The portières in the living-room will do very well.

Have your statues all in white with powdered hair, for they are to represent marble. Of course some statues are of bronze, but it is much easier to imitate the white ones than the brown ones. Besides almost everybody thinks of marble the minute you say "Statues."

To make the white statues stand out well, you should have a black background. This you can make with a screen or curtain of black cloth. Smaller screens or curtains of the black, one on each side will shut out everything except the statue and make it look better. But they are not necessary.

A box covered with black cloth makes a good pedestal. For groups, several boxes of different sizes are needed.

SOME GOOD SUBJECTS FOR STATUES

But you Can Think of Better Ones.

Scenes from Life:—as Going to School, Gathering Flowers.

People we Like:—as The Postman, Santa Claus, Grandmother.

Thoughts and Feelings:—as Pleasure, Kindness, Laziness.

Action:—as The Waltz, The Minuet, The Race.

Trades:—As Carpenter, Farmer, Bandmaster.

Famous People:—George Washington, Joan of Arc, Columbus, Shakespere.

Copies of Real Statues.

There's one little girl you must surely invite
  Whenever you act a play;
Unless she will help it will never be right
  Although you rehearse all the day.

You were reading a book when you met her before
  Or playing some beautiful game.
Be sure to invite her. Go ring at her door,—
  Imagination's her name.

TABLEAUX

"Tableaux" is the French word for "pictures." That is all you need to remember when you make them.

They are great fun and they have the added charm of often being very beautiful. If I were you, I should always try to make them as beautiful as they could be,—just as an artist does when he is painting a real picture.

Tableaux are easy, too.

How often we look at something lovely or interesting and say, "That looks just like a picture!"

Well, anything that looks like a picture can be one,—in a tableau.

You have to keep still in tableaux, of course. It wouldn't do to have our pictures moving around on the walls! But you can use more things to play with than in statues,—more "scenery" and "properties,"—and that makes them rather more interesting. But, of course, they take more time to do.

Another pleasant thing about making tableaux is that you can put color into them. You are an artist, you see, when you make these pictures, and you can choose the colors that you love to see together, just as the artist does.

Stories and poems can be illustrated by children in tableaux a great deal more beautifully than they can by even the best artists. So can scenes from history. So can all the seasons and everything beautiful in the fields and the gardens and the woods.

Anything that makes a picture in your mind when you think about it will do.

You may make your own stories, if you like, if you will be sure to make them so simple that anyone who looks at the tableaux can see just what they are.

Tableaux can be played anywhere. But it is good to choose for each the prettiest and most fitting background that the house affords.

When the artist paints his picture he thinks as carefully about the background as he does about the figures, if he is a good artist.

The most charming backgrounds are outdoors, in the garden or park. For the green of trees and bushes sets off the picture beautifully. Besides, it is best for children to do all that they can in the glad, bright, open air.

TABLEAUX FOR COMPANY

When you have tableaux as a part of the entertainment with a real audience and, perhaps, a programme, it will be best to make a frame for your pictures.

Any boy can do this, and any big girl ought to be able to.

Make a large frame of wood or very stiff cardboard with strips of wood to keep it steady and cover it with dull gold paper or yellow cloth. Small rosettes or scallops placed like the decorations on real frames make it seem more "sure enough." Some very handsome tableau frames have been decked with the gold tinsel flowers made to hang on Christmas trees.

Another frame—but this is a little bit harder—is covered with brown paper or cloth with narrow bands of gilt paper pasted flat, about an inch from each edge, all around. This represents the mahogany frames with gold inlay that

People of Other Lands:—as Dutch Tulip Grower, Spanish Bullfighter, Italian Singer.

Mother Goose Folk:—Simple Simon, Jack Sprat and His Wife, Bo Peep, Boy Blue.

Alice-in-Wonderland characters:—as Alice and the White Knight, The Walrus and the Carpenter, Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

Fairy Story Scenes:—as Sleeping Beauty, Jack and His Mother, Snow White and the Dwarfs, Red Riding Hood.

Other Story People:—as Little Women, Robin Hood and Richard of England, Paul and Florence Dombey, David Copperfield and Miss Trotwood, Lorna Doone and John Ridd, the Ruggles Family, Fauntleroy, Prince and Pauper.

Illustrated Poems:—as The Lady of the Lake, King Arthur and His Knights, The Village Blacksmith, Winken, Blinken and Nod, My Shadow, Little Orphant Annie, Hiawatha, The Barefoot Boy.

Nature's Messages:—as The Seasons, A Bunch of Flowers, The Blue Bird, The Butterflies, The Sea Shell.

Scenes from History:—as Penn's Treaty with the Indians, The Boy Abe Lincoln, Molly Pitcher, Pocahontas, Raleigh and Elizabeth.

Copies of Famous Pictures:—as The Infant Samuel, Baby Stuart, The Broken Pitcher, Penelope Boothby, The Angelus, The Girl with the Muff.

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I'll be a captive lady
And you be a pirate bold
  While Baby there
  With his golden hair
Is a bag of the pirate's gold.
This room is a cavern shady
Or a ship by the billows rolled.
  I know I'll be glad
  We are only a lad
And a lass when the play is told.

SHADOW PLAYS

The first shadow play was enacted when the first little baby danced with his shadow in the sunshine.

None of us ever get too old to be amused by the queer antics of our shadows as they grow tall and short and narrow and wide with the changing light.

Perhaps the funniest thing about them is that they belong to us and we can do with them all the entertaining things we wish.

Almost every child knows Stevenson's pretty poem, "My Shadow," and every child who knows it loves it. These verses make a very good Prologue to a Shadow Play. A prologue is just something said by one of the actors before the play begins, to make the audience ready for what is coming.

A Shadow Play is played entirely by shadows thrown upon a sheet. This sheet hangs between curtains or folding doors. The room must be darkened, of course. The audience sits before the sheet and the actors perform behind it,—between the sheet and a lamp.

The shadows are the real actors after all. The audience does not see the children themselves at all.

You will need at least one rehearsal before you give a successful shadow play. For you must find out just how things will look from the front.

First, you must decide how far back the lamp must stand in order to have the shadows the right size and sharp and clear.

You must see, too, that your lamp is shaded softly enough so that the lamp itself will not show through the sheet, and yet not too softly to have the shadows clear and sharp.

Unless a grown-up person or some very careful older child is watching the lamp, you had best use an electric or a gas lamp rather than one burning oil. Even with these you must take care. But every child ought to be able to take a little responsibility; and of course *you* can be trusted.

Now for the play.

Someone reads a ballad aloud. A ballad, you know, is a story poem. And the actors, already dressed up like the characters in the poem, act it out as it is read.

The audience hears the ballad read and sees it, at the same time, acted by shadows.

If it is necessary, in order to rest the voice of

the reader, or for any other reason, to divide the ballad into acts, the "curtain is rung down" in a shadow play simply by holding a screen or a fan, or any other dark object between the lamp and the sheet; or, if it is an electric lamp, by turning it out entirely.

It is easy to make costumes for a shadow play. They may be made of newspaper or of anything, just so they cast the right shadow.

The same is true of the scenery and properties. They may be cut out of cardboard, and even for showing large articles they may be quite small. For you can make the shadows as large as you please by holding the things at the proper distance from the light.

Making the properties is one of the chief delights of planning the shadow play.

Funny effects are often purposely made. This does not injure the play, for shadow plays are meant to be humorous.

Those of the actors who are not performing can hand properties to those in action, and can manage any changes in the scenery. But one person must be in charge of all of this very important part of the play. Handing the properties must be rehearsed very carefully, for everything must be ready the very second it is needed in the play.

Another thing to watch carefully is that the actors must not talk during the performance. Sometimes little people feel so safe because they cannot be seen that they forget how easily they can be *heard* with only a sheet between themselves and the onlookers.

It doesn't take long to give a shadow play and they are so very easy that two or three ballads can be given on the same afternoon.

MAKING YOUR OWN "PLOTS" FOR SHADOW PLAYS

Children can make delightful shadow play stories for themselves. Just make any story in your mind and play it in shadows. Only you must be very sure to have it simple and clearly shown, so that everyone will understand. For you see, there will be no spoken poem to help you.

Of course someone may make announcements, "before the curtain" now and then as they are needed.

A SAMPLE SHADOW PLAY

The greatest fun about making a shadow play is just like the greatest fun in anything else—doing it yourself.

Therefore I know better than to say, "do this" and "do so" and make laws and rules for you.

But here is a little shadow play outlined, just to give an idea of how they are made.

You may choose a poem of any length you wish to illustrate, but rather long ones are better as a shadow play is over so soon.

However, I'm going to take a very little one now,—just to show the way with.

This is read while	*this is acted in shadows.*
There was a little girl	"Little Girl" appears on sheet and makes a courtesy to audience. (It is better to dress up a boy in girl's clothes for this part.)
And she had a little curl Right in the middle of her forehead.	"Little Girl" lifts up a curl made of paper from "middle of her forehead." She pulls it long and turns profile to audience and makes curl "bob."
When she was good, she was very, very good,	Folds hands and looks upward, walks demurely across sheet.
But when she was bad she was horrid.	Sticks out tongue, stamps, shakes fist and is generally naughty.

She went upstairs	Steps of boxes pushed on scene at side. "Little Girl" mounts them. (Light screened. When light appears again "Little Girl" and steps are gone.)
When her parents, unawares, In the kitchen were occupied with meals.	Small table and chair pushed on. Little boy in "grown-up" clothes, with cotton mustache, appears and sits at table. Represents her "Father." A little girl, representing "Mother," in long skirt, with hair dressed high, appears. "Mother" gives "Father" plate, knife and fork. (Light screened. During darkness chair and table taken away and two big pillows put in their place.)
She stood on her head On her little trundle bed And then began hurraying with her heels.	"Little girl" appears and suits action to the words. (Now you see why it is better for a boy to take this part.)
Her mother heard the noise,	(Lights out. Pillows removed. Clear sheet shows when lights come again.) "Mother" runs to middle of sheet, stands in listening attitude, one hand to ear, other held up in surprise.

THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL AND SHE HAD A LITTLE CURL

She thought it was the boys	"Mother" nods head, and waves hands as if saying, "Oh! That's all right."
A-playing at circus in the attic;	Boys clatter across screen, riding on one another's backs, turning handsprings and other "stunts."
But when she climbed the stair	Box stairs pushed on at side. Mother climbs them. (Light screened. Pillows replaced.)
And found Jemima there	"Little Girl" shown, misbehaving as before. Mother appears. Is much shocked and horrified. "Little Girl" stands before her, very penitently.
She took her and she shook her most emphatic. —LONGFELLOW.	Suits action to words. Make the curl bob fast.

SHADOW MOVING PICTURES

A very laughable way to have shadow plays is to imitate moving pictures.

In making these, every action must be very quick indeed, and your gestures must all "wiggle" a little, like a flickering film. If you screen the lamp, throwing the sheet into darkness for a moment in the midst of an exciting scene you will add to the fun.

In the "movies" nothing must be spoken, of course. But you may cut out of stiff paper the names of the "plays" and any other notices and throw their shadows on the sheet,—just like in the real motion picture plays.

Making the accompanying noises is always amusing. Sand paper, an auto horn, an old tin pan, a whistle,—any noise-making toy,—or just your own hands, feet and whistling lips with help.

I am dancing
Dancing on the grass
Dancing on the green grass in the bright noon-
day,
Skipping, prancing,
Whirling as I pass;
I've a merry partner you will surely say.
She keeps time with me,
She keeps step, you see,
That is why this dancing is a joyous game.
When I curtsey,
Holding out my skirts, she
Just as quick as sunshine will do just the same.
She's not known to you?
I seem alone to you?—
Merry Mistress Shadow is my partner's name.

SHADOW TABLEAUX

A quick and easy form of shadow play that can be made "at a moment's notice" is the shadow tableau.

These tableaux take no practice and are often very jolly.

They are just shadow-pictures, without motion and may represent whatever comes into your head. Of course, only kind and pleasant fun will come there.

PANTOMIMES

A Pantomime is a play without words. After all, how few words we need to make ourselves understood! Why, Baby and Rover can do it perfectly without any words at all. When Baby puts up his hands and smiles at us, we know he likes us and wants to come to us, as well as if he had said so. And when Rover runs to the gate to meet us, wagging his tail, what words could give us a more loving welcome than his?

So, we can show pleasure and pain and surprise and eagerness and almost everything else without speaking. And that's the way to have a pantomime.

You take or make a simple story and act it without words,—by gesture and expression.

A pantomime should move lightly and quickly; so it is well to make up your minds beforehand just about what you will play. But each actor may improvise—or "make up"—as he goes along. But be sure to make everything clear as can be as you act it.

Pretty stories and merry stories are the most fun and lend themselves well to pantomime. Some children can play sad or touching panto-

mimes very well, too. But do not try these unless you are sure that no one will laugh. For it is too bad to have to laugh at things that are tender and sad.

The simplest pantomimes can be made about things that you see and know. More difficult, but perhaps more interesting ones for older players, about stories you read and think.

The place for a pantomime is just—any place. Let's have one now.

Here, we will pretend, is the nursery on Christmas Eve. Here, we will pretend, are a row of little white beds. Lie down all of you,—that's what smiling "Mother's" gestures mean. What! You shake your heads and point to the chimney? You haven't hung up your stockings yet? Run get them, then. Hang them up in a row. Gayly, merrily, happily,—but *silently,* for this is a pantomime. Now, "Mother" claps her hands—back to bed all! Some throw kisses up the chimney—we know for whom. Some are *so* sleepy,—see them yawn! Some hop into bed like a flash. "Mother" covers each one. There are no covers, but her gesture shows what she is doing. She kisses each. And tip-toes out of the room. All asleep! Who are these dancing so lightly in a ring? The holly fairies—one's a berry, one's a leaf. Round in a wreath they go, prancing and

dancing. See them now peeping under the covers to see if all are asleep. They clap their hands noiselessly and jump with joy. Then they run to the fire-place and wave up the chimney as a sign that all is well. From down the chimney—not really *down* it—but "make believe" down,—from the shadow of the fire-place, comes Santa with his pack. No real pack? Maybe not, but you can see he has one by the way he bends under it and lifts it around from his shoulders to the ground. He fills the stockings and places toys at the foot of each little bed, then dances a happy little dance because of the joy he has given. The holly fairies dance, too. All dance from the room together. Now it's morning. "Mother" comes softly in and closes the window so the room can get warm. She sits by the fireside happily waiting. Now one child wakes up. Now another. Soon all. Such kissing and jumping for joy and running to stockings and showing "Mother"! Merry Christmas, indeed! Dress now for breakfast. But before you have your own, open your window and throw make-believe crumbs in the make-believe snow for the make-believe birds.

Now, we've acted a pantomime. Wasn't it easy and wasn't it fun?

Now you know how and can make many for yourselves.

Let them move happily and quickly and they'll be delightful.

PANTOMIMES FOR COMPANY

The best thing about a pantomime is that you can play one without any properties or costumes at all, or with as many as you wish.

Of course, if you want to have a pantomime for guests, one that you practice beforehand and put time and care upon, it is well to make some simple costumes and have simple scenes.

Let the colors be bright and gay, for a pantomime is best in gay colors; but never let them clash with each other.

The prettiest "stage" for a pantomime is the great outdoors. But indoor "stages" between folding doors or behind a curtain, do well, too.

Fancy dances are lovely in pantomimes. But they must be "in character." For instance, your old witch must not dance the Highland Fling—she must act as a witch is supposed to do and dance in a fittingly "witchy" manner. But "Rob Roy" may dance a Highland Fling and everyone will be delighted.

Music played gently during a pantomime is very pleasant. But keep that "in character" too. Let us have marches when the soldiers

come in and just a murmuring lullaby when Beauty falls asleep.

SUBJECTS SUGGESTED FOR PANTOMIME

(*But You'll Like Your Own Better Than Mine.*)

Nature Plays—as "The Rain Drops and the Sun"—they drive each other away—each triumphs for awhile—they make peace—and build a Rainbow arch to show it.

Home Plays—as "Every Room in the House Put in Order"—the fine lady fays arrange the drawing-room—the goody fays the kitchen, and so forth.

Fairy Tales—from the simplest, as "Goldy Locks and the Three Bears," to the most elaborate, as "The Snow Queen." The "Snow Queen" makes a beautiful "company" pantomime.

Bits of History—as George Washington and the Hatchet; Dolly Madison Instructs Her Maids.

Poems—as "The Jackdaw of Rheims" (with a child for the Jackdaw).

Holiday Pantomimes—each Holiday will tell you what to do, if you let it.

Story Book Pantomimes—as Rip Van Winkle, or Rose and the Clan from "Eight Cousins."

MASQUES

Long years ago the art of acting was young, just as you are now. Instead of stages and scenery and footlights and expensive tickets, people often did their own acting. They just "played acting"—pretended to be somebody or something else, "made believe"—and had a good time.

And that's exactly what we strive to do when we "play acting" when Mother lets us.

That is why some of these long-ago kinds of plays are good for us to understand right now. They are easy and young and may be very beautiful. But, best of all, they are *happy.*

We have already agreed that the most fun is in doing it ourselves.

Pantomimes, of which you have learned, are old-fashioned and delightful.

I want to tell you now about the *Masques,* very long-ago plays, indeed. Why, Queen Elizabeth saw them when she was a little girl and Masques were probably among the very first plays that Shakspere ever knew about.

A pantomime may represent any kind of a story. But a masque should represent something that lives only in the mind and heart. The characters in a pantomime may be real-life peo-

ple like Father and Mother, or life-like book people. But the characters in a masque should be dream creatures like the Spirit of Love or Truth or Fun and Frolic or Springtime or Uncle Sam and Columbia or History or Music or Gods and Goddesses or Witches and Fairies. They should "stand for something."

A pantomime's happiness is *fun;* but the masque's happiness is *joy.* It must be more like poetry, you see. That is why masques are so good for celebrating great holidays.

In a pantomime you must not speak a word. But a masque may be played in pantomime or with simple words, or with song, or all three. Just as you please, if you will be careful to remember that you are not yourselves and to speak, sing and act *in character.*

A pantomime may have a stage setting, a scene and a curtain. But a masque is better "just so," played without anything to remind you of a theater. You may act a masque anywhere, just where you are or moving all over the house, or—best of all—outdoors.

On the other hand, a masque should have costumes. They may be simple—the simpler the better. But there must be something to show what the characters are. For you couldn't make it plain, by acting only, that you were Summer,

for instance, or Columbia or the Blue Bird of Happiness. You must have something to help, if it is only a red rose or a Liberty cap or a blue feather.

Making "costumes" and "properties" that help tell the story is one of the pleasures of giving a masque.

THE SIMPLEST MASQUES

The simplest masques are something like mere masquerades, only all the characters are part of the same thing instead of each child's representing something alone. Suppose, for instance, you take for your subject of simplest masque The Four Elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

Then the children taking part may divide in groups and represent:

Earth—Flowers, Fruit, Trees, Stones, Jewels, Farmers, Miners, Wood Fairies, Animals, etc.

Air—Rainbows, Balloons, Air Ships, Birds, Bees, Butterflies, the Wind, etc.

Fire—Flame, Blacksmiths, Firemen, Popcorn, Tea-kettle, Cooks, Smoke, etc.

Water—Fish, Fishermen, Boats, Coral, Seaweed, Mermaids, Phosphorus, etc.

Each group may dance, sing, make various noises, speak,—but always as the character portrayed.

This may be very pretty, but after all it is just a shade more interesting than a masquerade. A real masque is more worth while.

REAL MASQUES

A real masque takes a little more careful planning. But any group of children can make one. Giving a masque is the best simple way to *give* a good time and *have* a good time and leave a good memory all at once.

Perhaps the best way to tell you how to make a masque is to make one with you right now. Then you will know how to make them for yourselves.

We will call our Masque *"The Search for Happiness."*

A Pilgrim enters. This shall be a boy or girl in a cape and hat, with a staff in his hand. The Pilgrim shows by his acting that he is searching for something.

Now the piano plays, or someone sings, a German air—"Die Wacht Am Rhein," for instance. A little girl enters. She has on a white dress and over it are draped red and black ribbons. On her head she wears a gilt paper crown. If you are clever enough to cut out the double eagles of Germany of gilt paper, pin them on her dress conspicuously. On her arm she carries a quaint basket. She is Germany.

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

The Pilgrim raises his hat to her and comes towards her eagerly. She shows that he is asking for something.

Germany smiles. She gives him from her basket a sword. He refuses it, and shakes his head sadly. He does not think War can bring happiness. She puts back the sword and gives Pilgrim a roll of music. He accepts that with great pleasure. He reads it. (The pianist, if she can, may here play some great passage by a German composer, as Beethoven, Bach, Schubert, Mozart, Wagner). Music does bring happiness. But after awhile he wearies of it and sorrowfully returns the roll.

Germany steps back, a little to one side, but stands admiring the contents of her own basket.

A French air—perhaps the *Marseillaise*—is played.

Another girl in white with gold paper fleur-de-lis pinned all over her dress, and a white lily in a bandeau of red-and-blue ribbon on her head, enters dancing daintily.

In one hand she carries a mirror of fashion. This she gayly offers Pilgrim. He takes one look, smiles, shakes his head, returns it. There is no steadfast happiness *there,* he seems to say. France gives him an opera glass out of her bag. He enjoys looking through it while she dances,

and soon returns it. France gives him a paint brush and palette. In this he takes pleasure for a little while, painting at an imaginary picture. But this, too, he returns to France after a time. France then gives him a microscope or a test tube to show that she has won such great victories in science. This gives Pilgrim great joy, but at length he returns them too. He wishes more Happiness.

France takes her stand beside Germany, and admires her own possessions.

In the same way Holland, in Dutch peasant dress, offers him tulips, a red cheese, and a beautifully shiny brass kettle which she polishes for him, or a pair of ice skates.

Spain offers him a lasso for the bull-fight—he scorns it—and a tambourine or mandolin on which she plays or with which she dances.

Italy has a fine bit of sculpture for him and a bunch of grapes.

Africa, a boy in Boer hat with a pick-ax on his shoulder, presents a diamond from his mine.

Russia, a boy in furs, presents clanking chains —from which Pilgrim recoils—and a handsome piece of fur.

Asia, a girl in Chinese costume, spreads a rug and salaams on it, presents a lacquered box of incense and some ivory and brass.

Then England gives him some splendid gifts. A roll of paper, with a red seal on it, labeled *Law,* a scepter for power, a laurel wreath of gold for her poets, a quill pen for her other great writers, and a bunch of old-fashioned roses.

America, as Columbia, marches in confidently and gives him a ballot box. He looks in it delightedly for a time, but soon seems to see something that saddens him.

A national air is played for each country.

As each gift is offered, Pilgrim treats it with respect or contempt as it deserves. You will know for yourselves.

Nothing entirely satisfies him.

Each country stands in line with the others. Each is entirely satisfied with its own possessions and does not see the others or looks scornfully at them.

Pilgrim stands sadly in front, with his back to them.

Then very softly the piano plays, "Peace on Earth." A very small boy enters with a branch of holly in his hand.

He goes to France and puts her hand into that of Germany, Germany's other hand into that of Holland, and so on until all the nations stand in a ring around Pilgrim.

They look into one another's baskets admir-

ingly and smile into one another's faces. They begin to sing "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."

Pilgrim throws his hat into the air for joy and lifts the little boy to his shoulder, holly branch waving.

The nations, arms about one another or hands clasped in friendship, dance around him gayly.

Happiness is found!

The piano plays "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and all sing:

This world will happy be
Only when peace we see
To all mankind.
North, east and south and west
Each by the other blest,
That country called the best
Which is most kind.

PASTORALS

Masques that suggest the woods and fields, and shepherds and farmers, and nature at her happiest, whether played outdoors or in, are called Pastorals. They should be filled with garlands of flowers and dances.

Here is one you can play any day in your garden, if you have one, or in the park, or in your

make-believe garden anyway. It's a good summer masque for sands or woods.

It does not need much costuming. Just a little crepe paper will do—or anything you may have with which to get the simple effects.

All masques must move quickly, but Pastorals must actually dance along.

We'll call this "The Coming of May."

I'm not going to work it out for you and spoil half of your fun.

I shall just hint that the white snow elves have covered the world and Jack Frost is turning somersaults for joy, when the gray winds blow them away and the splashing, flashing, twinkle-fingered rains wash them away, and the lusty, laughing, yellow sunbeams melt them.

Then the crocuses and tulips and early violets —so sleepy!—begin to "ope their shining eyes" as Shakspere says. Then they jump up, merrily greeting everybody and waving their bright flags. And—Oh, joy! joy!—here come the song sparrows and the blue birds! Now the breezes throw fruit-blossom-petals about. Bees buzz-z.

Shepherds and shepherdesses and farmers and their lasses gather these flowers into May posies.

They choose a May Queen and dance on the green,—birds and flowers and mortals so gay; for all the world's singing, "It's May! It's May!"

That's a pastoral.

SOME IDEAS FOR MASQUES

(You Will Think of Others)

FOR SIMPLEST MASQUES

Down in the Meadow.
Dreams.
Colors in Nature and Art
Things a Child Loves.
What Are Little Girls Made Of and What Are Little Boys Made Of?

FOR REAL MASQUES AND PASTORALS

The Stars Give a Party.
Freedom's Messengers.
The Four Winds.
History of the American Indian.
Out of Pandora's Box.
The Quest of the Holy Grail—or other tales from King Arthur.
Who Loves Best?
The Farmer's Day.
What the Fay Taught the Milkmaid.
Fairy Tales,—as Thumbelina.
Wonder Tales,—as Atalanta's Race.
What the Birds Bring.
The Golden Harvest.
The Thoughts of a Child.
The Thoughts of a Mother.
The Thoughts of a Teacher.

MORALITY

This is the pleasantest kind of a preaching,
This is the easiest lesson we're teaching,
Teaching and preaching in rollicking play
Lectures aren't hard when you get them this way.

MORALITY PLAYS

Masques and simple word plays that teach pleasant little sermons—not too preachy, but good enough to help us to live happily and not be ashamed of talking over righteous actions and admiring and enjoying them—are called *Moralities.*

The long-ago Morality plays used to be presented on a little cart drawn up in the yards of country inns.

And I know a little girl who tried to have one in an old wheelbarrow in her yard, for that reason. But she found it much too crowded.

Morality plays are very good for Sunday School gatherings.

The masque, you remember, of "The Search for Happiness" was rather a Morality Masque.

But usually the Virtues themselves, Hope, Courage, Kindness, and the rest, and the faults, too, take part in the play. They make simple speeches showing their characters.

See if you can make one.

Here is a tiny verse that you can easily work out into a little Morality Play for yourselves.

Great deeds are like the sun above
They fill our lives with joy and love,
But simple kindness is a light,
And when the sun is hid by night
Then, in our hours of darkest need,
A little light may lead.

MORALITY PLAY TITLES

(*You May Improve Upon Them.*)

Right Stronger than Might.
Truth Shall Make You Free.
Everychild's Temptations and Victories.
East or West, Home is Best.

CHARADES.

Almost all children know how to act charades. But in case some of you do not, perhaps I'd better tell.

A charade is a kind of acted riddle.

Divide the children into two groups, one to act the charade and the other to guess its meaning. When the guessing group is successful, it does the acting in its turn.

A charade is made of a long word that can be divided into smaller ones, like mag-pie, or com(e)-for-table. It is acted out syllable by syllable.

Let us act the word *man-age-able.*

For the first act, called "My first" in a charade, have a little fellow dressed up in Father's coat and hat and carrying a cane. He behaves in a mannish fashion and keeps saying, "I'm quite grown up." The audience, if it is clever enough, sees that he illustrates "man." It does not have to tell its guess, until the whole word is played.

"My second" is shown by a little girl walking with a stick like an old woman, perhaps being helped along by a little child. Another girl refuses a piece of bread, saying, "It's old and stale." Another child wears a placard reading, *Born—1902.* Answer: *Age.*

"My third" is presented by several boys trying to leap a bar—or doing anything you may prefer—and failing. But one succeeds and says proudly, "*I* can. *I* can. *I* can." The answer is, "able."

"My whole"—the entire word, *manageable* is indicated by a school teacher telling her class to do certain things and exclaiming, as they obey her, "How easy they are to govern!"

The guessers have a little consultation and if they can guess the charade it is their turn to act one. If they give it up, the same actors produce another.

DUMB CRAMBO.

Dumb Crambo differs from charades in two ways.

First, you must not speak in Dumb Crambo. All must be acted in silence, in pantomime.

Secondly, in Dumb Crambo the audience chooses the word and the actors do most of the guessing.

The only clew they have is rhyme.

The audience decides for instance that the word shall be *Hope.*

They tell the actors "It rhymes with soap!"

Then the actors pretend to be pulling a bell. "No!" cry the audience, "It's not *rope.*"

Then the actors pretend to try to placate one of their number who sits alone, angry and pouting.

"No," they laugh, "wrong again. It's not *mope.*"

And so they keep trying until they act "Hope," unless they give it up before.

We know just where the fairies live
And we can show you true;
If you'll be patient we will give
The fairy lore to you.
We know just what the fairies do,
We've all their charms and arts,
For fairy joys and frolics too
Are hid in children's hearts.

Now, I will show you a wonderful thing,
  Never you thought to see,—
A Beautiful Princess, a Queen and a King
  Who once were my sisters and me.
We used to be only two girls and a lad
  Who went every morning to school;
But now,—did you know of the palace we had
  Where we sit on the sofa and rule?

ACTING STORY PLAYS

Acting out our stories is a joyous thing to do.

Every child has deep in his heart some favorite story people, and we all know how often, in our imaginations, we pretend to be these beloved dream folk.

Many a time when the grown people who meet us see only our every-day selves—just Susan and Tommy—*we* know that The Fair One With Locks of Gold and Sir Launcelot really stand before them.

All that you need do when you act a story is to *tell the story in acting.*

The joy of this kind of acting is that you can just begin to do it at any time, without any preparation whatever.

One thing you must be sure of—that all the children who are "taking part" know the story.

Then you must choose a leader who shall tell each child what part he is to play. And you must all "play fair" and be satisfied with your parts. Sometimes a little part well played makes more fun for everyone than a big one. And the child

who plays a big part in one story should play a little one in another.

You must speak in the story-plays, unless you have agreed to play them in pantomime. It is not necessary to use "the words of the book," however. Indeed, it is better fun not to do so.

Every child can tell the story of his "part" in his own words.

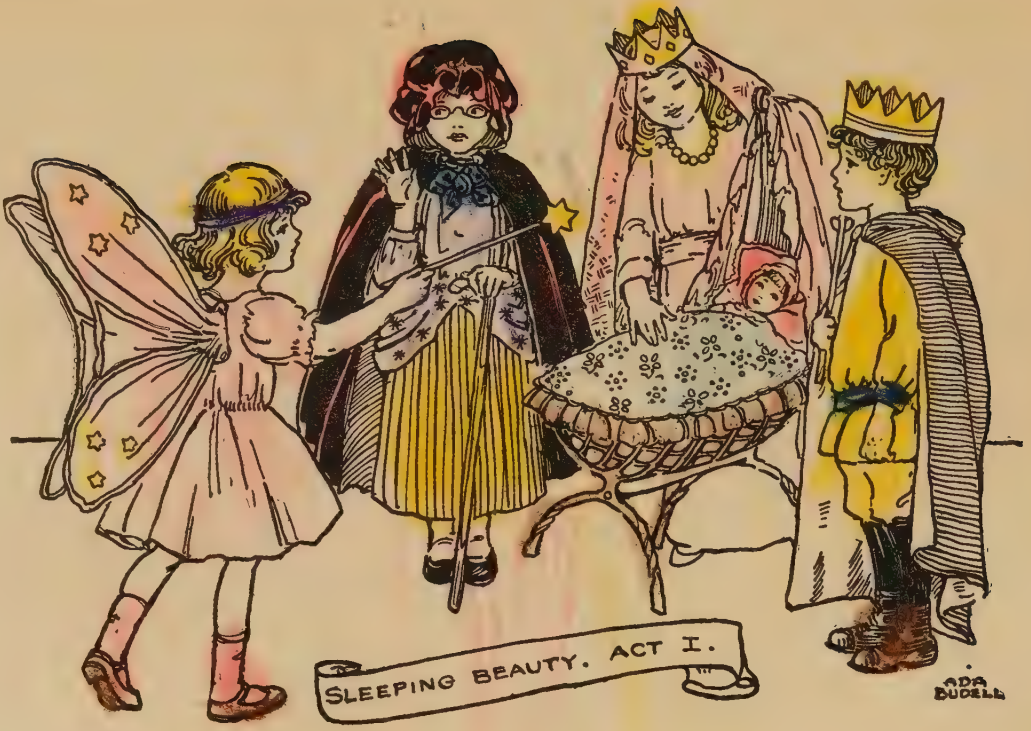
To act a story as you go along, in this way, you need not have a great number of children, because each can "take the part" of two or three characters—provided they do not appear on the scene at the same time.

Another advantage is that, if you must, you may stop whenever you wish and talk about what to do next. That is like writing the play as you act it.

Only, it is wise to appoint one child as Manager and leave all disputed questions to that child for decision. Though, of course, among well-bred people, there will not be any *real* disputes.

As to "properties" and costumes, these add to the fun, if you happen to have any in the wardrobe box. But if you haven't any handy, you can do very well without them.

Bringing into the play little songs and dances that suit the characters goes far to making it interesting.


SLEEPING BEAUTY. ACT I.
ADA BUDELL

But if you do the chief thing of all—really *be* the characters—all the rest will easily and naturally take care of itself.

PLAYING A FAIRY TALE

Suppose you children at home are Gerald and Ruth, and Baby Robert, and the little friends who have come to play with you are Agnes and Paul and little Elsie.

"Let's act Sleeping Beauty," cries Ruth.

But "We don't know how to act it," Agnes may say. "Did you learn the parts in school?"

"Oh! No, indeed," Gerald answers, "we just act the *story*. You know the story, don't you?"

"Of course!" says Paul. "Everybody knows Sleeping Beauty."

"Oh! Then it will be easy. Sometimes, some of us don't know the story the others want to act, and then we have to read it over together first, or tell it. That's the good of choosing well-known ones. All you have to do is just to act out the story. Who shall give out the parts?" says Gerald.

"You do, Gerry," says Agnes, "because you are the oldest and know all about it."

"Well—all right; I will. But you must all advise me if you have any ideas. Agnes you be Beauty," Gerald begins, because he is a polite

A KING AND A QUEEN

boy and wishes to give his guests the chief parts.

But Agnes says she'd rather not take such an important part in the first play. She'd rather do a smaller part until she knows how.

And soon the parts are all arranged. This is the way that you play the story.

Gerald and Ruth are the King and Queen and they talk about their dear Baby Daughter Beauty and how they hope that all the fairies will come to the christening. They tell about having sent the invitations to all except the unpleasant Fairy Discord, and they think she would not want to come anyway. They hope she won't feel slighted; but she always upsets the other fairies so that they just couldn't ask her.

Pretty soon the other children come in to the christening. Some are human friends and some are fairy friends and Kate's doll is the baby. They are having a happy time. This is a good place to have dancing and singing.

Right in the midst of all the fun, Agnes enters angrily and sulks in a corner. She is Discord.

All the others bend over the baby and offer good wishes, fairy wishes that must come true—Loveliness and Goodness and Wisdom and every other grace of face and spirit. Even the littlest actors can make up good wishes.

Just before the last fairy has made her wish,

horrid old Discord comes clattering up and in a loud voice utters the famous evil charm that Beauty shall some day stick her finger with a spindle and then she and all her friends shall sleep forever.

Everyone is horrified. But Kate, as the last fairy, who has not yet given her wish, must say that she is not powerful enough to remove the evil of Fairy Discord entirely, but that she can make it lighter. So she says Beauty shall not sleep forever, but only until a Prince shall awaken her with a kiss.

This is the end of Act I. The end of an act is only a good place to stop for a rest or change. Then the players can decide about the next act.

Act II is in the Palace Hall,—in your imagination. Here are the King and Queen and courtiers. Baby Rob is the King's little page, and little Elsie waits on the Queen. Kate is Beauty, and it is her sixteenth birthday, and everyone brings her presents and she is sweet to all.

What! There is no one left to be "everybody" and "courtiers" but Paul? Well, then we must imagine the rest! Paul can be two or three people, coming in and out, and so can the little ones, Rob and Elsie.

The Queen and King must tell how they have

kept all spinning wheels and spindles out of the castle and thus prevented Discord's bad charm from coming true. And after this birthday, the fairies have said, the charm wears out, and the danger will be over.

So then they all leave the "hall" to prepare the feast.

Now we see—or imagine we see—Beauty's own room. Kate (Beauty) enters it and goes to her mirror. But Agnes (Discord) is there in a dark corner, spinning. She is disguised as an old woman—in a cape and cap or the cook's apron, or anything you may have. She sings in a queer, trembling voice.

You see, Agnes has an important part, after all, and can do it perfectly. It isn't always the name part that is hardest.

Kate (Beauty) sees her and wants to know all about her presence and the spinning. Agnes (Discord) all too willingly shows her and gives her the spindle.

Beauty sticks her finger on the sharp point and the wicked fairy laughs and goes out in triumph.

Beauty yawns and rubs her eyes and can scarcely get to the couch. She lies there and falls fast asleep. End of Act II.

In Act III the first scene is—supposed to be—

outside the Palace. All of the boys, even Baby Rob, are here as Princes trying to cut their way through the forest of vines and brush that have grown up about the sleeping castle. They tell each other about their trials and the wild animals they have met and all the other princes who perished or else grew weary of the hopeless task and went home. The girls "behind the scenes" can howl and growl for the wild beasts in the forest.

At last Prince Dash (Baby Rob) grows weary and puts down his imaginary ax and bids the others good-by. Later Gerald (Prince Flash) does the same. But Paul is Prince Hold-fast and he will not give up. He declares he *will* win his way into the Palace and waken the Princess. And, of course, at last he does. The girls behind the scenes can now be fairies and cry in little voices, "Hurrah!"

Second scene of Act III—for the scene must now change in imagination, though it is really the same old nursery or garden—shows Gerald and Ruth (King and Queen) asleep on their thrones and Rob and Elsie and Agnes (for the Fairy Discord has gone and Agnes is now a Court Lady) all fast asleep.

Paul (Prince Hold-fast) looks at them sadly and goes on through the castle—same old nursery

—to the couch where Beauty is sleeping. He wakens her with a kiss. Then all the others slowly awaken. The charm is broken!

All dance gayly and we have played our Fairy Tale and been our own audience as well as actors and had a royal good time.

ACTING MYTHOLOGICAL TALES

Fairy stories are fun, as we all know, and some of them are so well loved and so poetic and high and fine that it does us good to live them. And when we can get a high feeling of "being in good company" and thoroughly enjoy ourselves at the same time, we have accomplished something worth while.

Now, ever so many of the stories of Greek and Norse and even American Indian mythology that some of the "middle-aged" and older children know, have this quality.

When you act them you must remember that these stories were part of the religion and the poetry of long-ago wonderful people. These stories were their way of explaining nature.

When the Greeks heard a brook laughing over the stones, they said a nymph—a sort of water fairy—lived in it and laughed. The sun was to them a glorious young god named Apollo who drove his golden chariot across the heavens.

The moon was a lovely, pure-hearted goddess who went hunting with a silver bow and arrow.

But most of you children have read about them in the Wonder Book by Hawthorne, in many other good books and at school.

I am reminding you of what they mean to make you feel, how interesting it will be to act them out. For you will have opportunity not only to act the stories, but to act what they stand for— the beauties of nature. This makes them excellent to give out-doors.

And they are as joyous and gay as they are noble and among the easiest stories to act.

ACTING TALES FROM EVERY-DAY LIFE

Of course, stories about real people, our story-book friends, are even easier to act than the fairy stories. Because to most of us, at least, it is easier to imagine oneself Sara Crewe or Tom Sawyer than Thumbelina or Jack the Giant Killer.

These folksy stories, too, are often full of humorous situations and of funny quotations that we often think of and use in our family life. That makes it easy and delightful to play them.

And there are so many of them!

On the whole I predict good fun for every group of youngsters who will try to act their own favorite story friends.

ACTING HISTORICAL STORIES

If it gives such pleasure to put yourselves into the place, into the very life, of fairy book-folk, and myths and your own fiction playmates, think how exciting and splendid it must be to play that you are the heroes of the great historical romances, or of History itself!

Isn't it enough to stir any boy's blood to play that he is Cæsar crossing the Rubicon, or Richard Lion-Heart talking to Cedric the Saxon? What girl will not delight to be Zenobia of Palmyra or Philippa of England?

Boys can have tournaments and tests of valor in History Plays and girls can give wreaths of honor and hold fêtes to their hearts' content.

ACTING STORIES FOR COMPANY

When you intend acting stories for an audience of invited guests, of course, you must make more preparation than when you just decide to act for your own play.

You must begin to plan far enough ahead to be sure that things will go smoothly and without a hitch.

Your Manager must make out a little list of the characters in the story and the children who are to perform and decide who is to be given each part. It would never do, for instance, if you were playing Jack the Giant Killer, to have Jack played by a great big boy and the giant by a little fellow, or to choose a very dark girl to play The Fair One With Locks of Gold.

Then you must play the story for the first rehearsal and after each act stop and discuss how you might have made it better; and keep "working it over" until you get it done as well as possible. The Manager must take notes of those things you want particularly to remember, so

that he may be sure to have them done in every rehearsal.

For you must have a number of rehearsals before the performance.

You will need a set stage,—that is a little scenery, as I have explained to you in the first part of this book, some simple costumes and some "properties" or things to play with. You may have a curtain or folding doors to indicate change of acts and to let you change the "fixings" of the scenery when necessary.

The properties and costumes and scenes needed will vary with the stories. But, in general, here are some of the things that will probably be required.

Scenes should be indicated as simply as possible. A few branches against a background of green curtains will indicate a forest perfectly. Or a strip of paper stenciled with leaves and tacked on a screen or the portières will serve. Most of the fairy plays need forest, palace or kitchen. A throne—a great chair draped with a curtain will do—is enough to indicate royalty. And a fireplace with a kettle on it is good for the story kitchen.

For the history plays, the simpler the scenery the better. For children cannot hope to reproduce the historical setting truly. Though if you

can copy old pictures you will find it well worth while. Plain hangings with a gilt sword or crown of paper pinned on them—or anything symbolic of the period of the story—are usually dignified and ample.

The myths are, as a rule, better out of doors against a background of trees. Indoors, plain hangings, with a Greek border of paper, or a strip of "forest" will generally do best.

Scenes for the every-day life stories and their costumes too, you can make without any guidance.

Fairy costumes may be as plain or as fancy as you wish. But here's a hint for you—easy, plain things usually make the best effects. You will probably need some gilt crowns and wooden swords gilded, and wands for the fairies, and gnomes' caps and witches' hoods—all very easy to make.

The characters in myths can be beautiful just draped in white or colored cheesecloth, with borders of colored or gilt or silver paper.

The history stories are more difficult to costume if you try to do too much. But they are just as easy as any if you are content simply to indicate the character and time. The result will be as pleasing.

Let each child be responsible for his own

"properties." But have a list of them and have the Manager read the list before each performance and check them off with the players to be sure that everything is there.

Then play your story, simply, naturally, forgetting the audience and only thinking of your part just as if you were really the characters in the book and they were *reading* you.

GOOD STORIES TO ACT

(*But There are Many Others*)

Cinderella
Blue Beard
Sleeping Beauty
Whittington
Snow White
Hansel and Gretel
Curly Locks and Three Bears
Rapunzel
Beauty and the Beast
Legend of Sleepy Hollow
Prince and Pauper
Scenes from Ivanhoe
Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare
Ceres and Proserpine
Labors of Hercules
Aladdin
Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch
The Kenwigs Family from Nicholas Nickleby
Sara Crewe
Lord Fauntleroy
Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn
Editha's Burglar
Scenes from Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm
Scenes from Five Little Peppers

COLUMBUS DISCOVERING AMERICA

Scenes from Little Women
Scenes from Little Men
The Ruggles' Party from Birds' Christmas Carol
Field of Cloth of Gold
Scenes from Life of Columbus
Girlhood of Jeanne d'Arc
Girlhood of Queen Elizabeth
Pocahontas
Davy Crockett

AN INVITATION

Fairy people come
  You are all invited!
Elf and fay and gnome,
  Not a one is slighted;
We are acting some
  Stories you've indited
So we bid you come;
  We shall be delighted.

ACTING POEMS

STORY POEMS

Poems that tell a story may be acted, just as the stories are acted, either in pantomime or with words,—your own words. Some of the best stories are those in Poems.

You must be very sure, however, to treat poems as if they *were* poems. They are fine and beautiful and the finest and most beautiful interpretation must be given to them.

When you use your own words you must try to use just the right ones.

The most beautiful way to treat poems is to learn bits of the poem to speak in the acting. But as that is scarcely possible when we just feel like acting without any, or without much, preparation, I will tell you the next best.

That is to act the poem in pantomime while some child who reads well, reads the poem aloud. Or several children may take turns in reading.

Of course, you must agree on the parts before

you begin. After you have done a poem once or twice, you will be quite ready to present it before guests. They will love it with or without "properties."

But just hearing the beautiful words and acting the beautiful deeds will make your whole life lovelier. And you will enjoy doing it.

You may use serious or humorous poems. A pleasant afternoon's entertainment can be given with one or more poems of each sort.

POEMS WITHOUT STORIES

Another lovely and enjoyable and easy way to perform poems is to act those that do not have a real story at all.

This does not sound easy, but it is the simplest thing in the world when you try.

For instance, even the youngest children can act Tennyson's

> What does little Birdie say
> In her nest at peep of day?
> "Let me fly," says little Birdie,—
> "Mother, let me fly away."
> Birdie rest a little longer
> Till the little wings are stronger.
> So she rests a little longer
> Then she flies away.

What does little Baby say
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little Birdie,
"Let me rise and fly away."
Baby, sleep a little longer
Till the little limbs are stronger;
If she sleeps a little longer
Baby too shall fly away.

And just as the little ones can interpret this little poem in action so can almost any good poetry be interpreted by the older children.

There isn't a happier thing you can do when Mother lets you act.

SOME POEMS TO ACT

(A Few Out of Hundreds.)

I will not give you names of many poems, because the best part of acting poems is hunting up the poems to act. What a fine way to spend a rainy afternoon looking up old favorites and finding new ones!

Among the Story Poems:—Macaulay's Lays, The Pied Piper, Hiawatha, We Are Seven, The Ballad of the Waller Lot, Lady of the Lake.

Among other Poems:—The Daffodils. Foreign Children, Old Kentucky Home.

GARLANDS

A lovely acting game for all children,—though girls like it better than boys,—is Playing Garlands.

Garlands are very simple and make a delightful way to celebrate a birthday or welcome a beloved guest. They are also good to play without any occasion, but just for fun.

A Garland is a little group of plays acted one after the other, all a part of the same idea, and each one acted by one child only! You see the children in a Garland Play are like the flowers in a garland. Each flower is admired alone and yet all the flowers are in the garland.

All the parts of the Garland must be acted in rhyme. Easy rhymes that any bright group of children can "make up," or little poems that you already know.

When Grandmother comes, for instance, you can have a Garland of Greetings. Encircle Grandmother, hand in hand. Then let each child represent something that is glad to welcome Grandmother.

One represents the chickens and struts and flutters and says, perhaps:

Cluck, cluck! Cheep! Cock-a-doodle-doo!
We're very glad when we see you.

One represents the Flowers,—this one spreads her skirts and acts like a flower. She may wear a flower in her hair and may say:

The flowers so sweetly grew and grew
Just in the hope of pleasing you!

And so on,—you can make up the rhymes yourselves.

This is the simplest form of Garlands.

You can work them into such lovely little poems that each child really acts a tiny play in words and gesture and song and dance.

A Garland of Robert Louis Stevenson's poems, each child taking one poem and speaking, or singing, and acting it, is charming. A touch of costume can also be used with effect,—just something simple to carry out the idea. I have already shown you how.

A Eugene Field Garland, a Riley Garland, a Longfellow Garland, any loved poet's Garland, is good, and a graceful way of celebrating the birthdays of the poets.

Garlands can be fitted to many uses. Your own imaginations will tell you the best ones.

Rover played at acting, too,
  We used him for a dragon
And he knew just the thing to do,—
  He broke a doll and wagon.

So then we let him run away,
  For Robert said to Nell,
"It's very dang'rous to a play
  When dragons act *too well.*"

Shakspere, they say
Wrote a wonderful play,—
Indeed he wrote many and many.
But I wrote another
And showed it to Mother,
She said it was nicer than any.

ORIGINAL PLAYS

Children who love to compose plays for themselves are usually the same children who enjoy "making up" stories. They are the children of whom we often hear it said that "their heads are in the clouds."

If they keep their eyes and ears on the earth and their minds and hearts alert to earthly needs and earthly interests, too, the children whose "heads are in the clouds" are they who get the most joy out of life.

At any rate, when we want to make a play, all new, a play-story out of our own heads, these are the children who usually lead the way.

THE PLOT

Sometimes the story to be played—this is called the Plot of the Play—is composed by one child and told to the others, who may make suggestions or offer changes. Sometimes a group of children work out the tale together.

There are a few rules to remember in making the plot if you wish your play to be a success.

First, you must make the story about some-

thing you know and understand. It may be about things and people in your every-day life or things and people in your reading or your study. But you must be sure to "know what you are talking about." You certainly cannot put yourselves in the places of people whose times and customs and thoughts children do not understand.

The simplest plots are the best and those about Nature, every-day life or Fairyland—which every child understands—are usually the most popular.

You must make a plot that has action in it—that is, a plot that keeps moving. In other words, something must be happening all the time. If you are interested in the story as you make it or hear it from the lips of its young author, the chances are that those who see the play will be interested in it too.

ACTING THE ORIGINAL PLAYS

When you have agreed upon the plot you act it, just as you do any other story play.

Sometimes, as you try to act the story, you will find it necessary to change it.

It may be hard to make clear, it may be beyond the powers of the little actors,—there may be a number of reasons for making changes.

The child or children who composed the story or plot must be glad to have the changes made. For everyone is trying to make the play a happy success and that is the only thing to consider.

All the rules for acting Story Plays apply just the same to the plays you compose yourselves.

WRITING DOWN THE PLAYS

Sometimes a play is such a success that you will want to keep it to use again and sometimes, for a great occasion, you will want to write a play and take the "parts" and the songs home to study just as you do with the plays you are required to act in school.

When you are about to write a play, first think up the plot or story you mean to use. Then you may be helped by making and following two little plans. First, one like this:

1. Write the part that tells what the audience must know before it can understand the story.
2. Let the story begin.
3. Lead up to the part that everything depends on.
4. Write the part that everything depends on.
5. Show how everything depended on that part.
6. Lead up to the way out of the trouble.
7. Show the way out.

8. The happy ending and the last words.

Following that plan will keep the little play growing straight ahead and not jumping around and losing the story. It will lead your mind on and keep you from wondering what to say next.

Then, this other little plan:

1. Divide the play into Acts—usually three acts.

2. Let each act end at a good stopping place, a place where you could lay down the book for a little while and think, if you were reading the story. Do not stop an act at too exciting a place. But let it be exciting enough to make people eager for the curtain to rise again.

3. Try to keep the same scene throughout an act, if you can. That is, try to have all of the act happen in the same place.

4. Have all the things that happen in an act supposed to take place on the same day.

5. Remember that an act of a play is something like a chapter of a story.

Make a list of the characters in the story and keep it before you while you write, so that all the characters may be used as often as the story will let them.

Show when a character is to come on the stage by the words,—*Enter So-and-So.* And when a character is to leave, write, *Exit So-and-So.*

When your play is written have it read to the children who will play the parts. Then have them act it by reading, each child reading his or her own part.

For a short play such as you will write it is good to have a copy of the whole play for each child to study from.

Real grown-up actors in real grown-up plays have copies of only their own parts and the last lines of the speeches before theirs, so they can tell when to begin to speak.

The last line of the speech before yours is called your *Cue*. And the best actors begin to speak as soon as they hear their cues. That is called "taking up their cues quickly."

When you have written your play, you just study and rehearse it and play it according to the general rule.

STUDYING REAL PLAYS

This book is intended chiefly to tell you about the plays that children really *play*. We are not thinking so much of the plays that we have to learn, though they are pleasant too, as of those plays that we "just get up ourselves" because we want to and Mother lets us.

We have been thinking chiefly about doing it all ourselves.

But sometimes little clubs or classes of children will find a good play already written for children to act and will be so pleased with it that they want to present it.

Full directions are always given with these published plays. But there are some things it is wise to bear in mind.

Let everybody be willing to work hard to learn the lines "by heart" as quickly as possible. A whole play may be spoiled because one child would not learn quickly enough to let the rehearsals run smoothly.

Make up your minds to come to every rehearsal no matter how well you know your part. A re-

hearsal is not for each child's part *separately.* We rehearse so that the whole play may be as good as we can make it. We are interested in everybody's part the same as in our own.

Accept any correction that the Manager may make and do just what the Manager says, with perfect good humor. The Manager of a play is like the Captain of an athletic team. We cannot do good "team work" and be successful unless everybody obeys the Manager.

Play the written play in the spirit of *play,* of pretending to be somebody, just as we did the little plays we worked out ourselves.

Be sure to have one child responsible for the "properties," the things you act with. But also have every child responsible for his own. Let the "property manager" keep a list of "properties" for each act and check them off before the curtain goes up. Do this in rehearsals as well as when the play is given.

SONG

Everything is singing a song,—
The ocean is singing one all the day long,
Every bird in its woodland tree,
Even the crickets and bumble bee!
Listen, now, to the breeze in the grass!
Can't you hear the brooks as they pass?
Baby is up in the apple tree swing,
When he comes down you'll hear the rope sing.
All the world is singing a song;
That's why I'm singing, too, all the day long.

SONGS

JUST SINGING

Everybody loves to sing. But everybody—except tiny tots who in some ways seem to be the wisest of us all—everybody seems to think we have to learn songs, words and music, in order to sing.

To be sure, it is good to learn songs and to sing them. But that is no reason you cannot sing anything that comes into your mind.

Just sing because you want to. Sing because you're happy—as Baby Brother does.

In telling you how to act the different plays in this book, I often said that singing and dancing would make things happier and livelier. And so they will.

When you happen to know a song that "just fits" the play, use it, of course. Nothing could be better than that. And if you know where you can find one that "will just do," that is fortunate.

But when you do not know a ready-made song, why, just sing the words that come to you and the tunes, too.

That is the way the birds sing. I have never heard better songs than theirs; have you?

PUTTING WORDS TO OLD TUNES

There are some melodies that everybody knows and loves.

You may put new words to these and sing them, if you wish,—words that suit the play you are giving.

When you are playing just for fun, make up the words as you go along and never mind whether they rhyme or not.

When you are going to give a play for guests, it is better to take a little more pains.

Get a copy of the words of the old song, or write them down from memory. Then make the new words with the same swing—so that they will fit into the music. They should rhyme in the same way as the old words do. That is, if the first and fourth lines in the well-known ballad rhyme with each other, so should they in your poem. Thus:

Believe me that all those endearing old songs
That so blithely we use in our play
Will like music surround us in life's busy throngs
Like fairy bells leading the way.
And whene'er they are heard, though afar we
may part

We shall think of our childhood once more
And shall play the dear plays once again in our heart
That we played in the gardens of yore.

You must be careful of one thing, however. If you are singing gay, rollicking words, choose a rollicking tune. If your words are tender and gentle, find a song like them.

Happy, happy dance along
And happy, happy sing too!
We're gay as any mocking bird
And wish we had a wing, too!

But

All sitting round the nursery fire,—
Children at rest—
All dreaming while the flames go higher—
That's what we love the best.

MAKING UP YOUR OWN MUSIC

Sometimes a group of children will be blessed with one who can "make up" music as others can compose words.

Then you can make your own songs.

All that you need remember, little composer, is to keep your efforts simple and *think of the story* and make the music a part of it.

ACTING SONGS

Another delightful thing to do is to act a song instead of a poem.

You can have one child sing it and the others act it in pantomime or shadow or tableaux.

Or you can have the song sung before you begin and then act it out in words like any other play.

Or you can have the song—if it is a well-known one—played very softly on the piano while you act it.

Another pleasant way is to have one child sing the descriptions and general story part of the song and each actor and actress sing the words of his or her own "character."

OPERA PLAYS

This leads us to a joyous place.

Give an opera!

Oh, yes, you can.

It isn't hard at all. When you read the full directions, you will laugh to think how easy they are.

Instead of acting a play, *sing it.* That's all.

If you want to act an opera for company, fit some of your words to song-music in the way I have just explained and sing other words, just hit or miss, as you like.

CANTATAS

There are charming little cantatas published for young singers to purchase and learn.

A cantata is a poem or story set to music, for a number of singers to act. It is really a tiny opera.

All the general rules of acting will cover it. Only you must work harder and be even more faithful about rehearsals than in speaking plays. Because in music everyone depends on everyone else and one careless performance spoils all.

DANCE

Children, children, dancing on the green!
  Oh, it is the gayest sight
  Anyone has seen!
Children, children, dancing in a ring;
  Now your left foot and now the right,
  Now we turn and swing!
Children, children, twirling on their toes!
  Oh, it is the gayest sight
  Anybody knows!

DANCE

JUST DANCING

Of course, we all know how to dance.

It's the very first thing we do when we are very happy. We dance for joy.

We ought to do it more. It is a pity that grown-folks do not have more happy dances, "just for joy."

Long ago people used to dance to express their gladness more than they do now. All the old paintings and statues and stories and poetry tell us how happiness was expressed by beautiful, modest, graceful dancing.

When you dance in the plays all that you need to remember is the character you are representing.

The gnomes in Rip Van Winkle would dance differently from Fairies or Flowers. Mother Hubbard would not dance to express her joy in just the way that Jo and Laurie might.

Now you see what I mean, I am sure. Just as you act in character or sing in character, you must dance in character.

NATIONAL DANCES

Almost every school and every dancing school and many playground associations and gymnasium classes teach the Folk Dances.

These are the dances that people of the different countries use to express their moments of gayety and joy.

They are probably the most expressive of dances, because they grew up naturally. I mean, no one made them as they are now. They "just grew" like Topsy. They tell us about the nature of the people who dance them, whether they are quick and light of heart and heel or heavy and strong.

When your plays are laid in foreign lands, folk dances will help them to be interesting. The Highland Fling for Rob Roy, for instance!

THOUGHT DANCES

A most attractive use of the dance is the one easiest and most natural to children. It is the dance of the emotions.

Everyone has noticed the difference in our actions, especially the actions of our busy little feet when our feelings change.

You run differently to meet Father coming home from the way you run when your chicken breaks through the fence and you want to chase

it back. Tiptoeing to look at a parade over the heads of people in front of you is not a bit like tiptoeing because Baby is asleep.

So with dances. In pantomimes especially, let us have a dance of glad surprise, a dance of triumph, a dance of welcome, for instance. They will tell you themselves how to do them.

Only let us not have dances of sorrow. Sadness is best expressed by slow steps and solemn marches. It is not natural to dance when we are sad.

DESCRIPTIVE DANCES

These are the dances that are such fun—dances that describe the things we see in Nature.

In a very great play which most children know about, "The Blue Bird," there is a wonderful dance of Fire, and a wonderful dance of Water, too. Fire leaps and flashes and flickers and almost smokes and glimmers and smolders. And Water flows and glides and ripples and trickles.

Very famous performers presented these dances on the real stage. But any child could dance them, too. Because grown-ups have to learn all over again how things dance; but children have not yet forgotten.

Dew-drops, Wind, Clouds, Butterflies, Birds, Lightning and oh!—ever so many fine things to

express in dances are seen all about us. Use your eyes; they will point them out to you.

Sometimes you may interpret in dance not only what you *see* but also what you *hear*. I mean Music, of course.

If you have a gramophone or any music-playing device, or a player-piano or a child who can play good music well, you can show in dance the way the music makes you feel, the thoughts and pictures it puts in your minds.

But be sure to choose *cheerful* music. It is absurd to dance sad tunes.

HISTORIC DANCES

Of course, Folk Dances, which we have just danced together in our minds, are in a sense, historic. But there are some old dances that have around them the memories of other days. These will fit into history plays and make them real and beautiful as nothing else can do.

I will tell you about a few of them.

THE MINUET

This dance, which you have learned in Kindergarten and dancing school, is stately. We see so few stately things nowadays that I fear few of us have a clear notion of what the word *stately* means.

But any child who has seen the Minuet properly danced, will have some notion at least.

Your small dictionary will probably say, "Grand, majestic, dignified," but *stately* really says something more than that. It speaks of

beautiful manners, of courtesy, of queenliness and knightly grace.

The Minuet was the dance of graceful courts. It is both slow and light, both formal and full of ease.

It is a good dance for court plays or for plays of early Virginia, when Washington lived there and before.

If you do not know the minuet, the physical culture teacher will gladly show you. It is very easy.

If you dress for it, the pictures of court ladies

with powdered hair and quilted skirts with panniers and of court gentlemen in satin short trousers, wearing frills and white wigs, will show you what to imitate.

THE BARN DANCE AND REEL

"Folksy" plays of farm and country village will be embellished by old-time barn-dances and the Virginia reel. You'll not have much difficulty in finding someone to teach you *those,* if you do not already know them.

THE MORRIS DANCE

The Morris Dance is so old that it was danced before Sir Walter Raleigh ever came to America. Indeed it was beginning to die out and change a little even then.

Shakspere saw many of these dances—perhaps took part in some—and as he was a country boy who did not see many entertainments, the Morris Dancers were probably as great a delight to him as the circus is to you.

Some of the early Morris Dancers were dressed in gilt leather and silver paper and they all wore many bells and had castanets and tambourines. For some say that "Morris" meant Moorish in the first place, and that Morris dancing came to England from Spain.

YE MORRIS
ADA BUDELL

Later, any fantastic costumes would do; and any will do now. Only you really ought to have the bells and a piper—who may use a comb or a penny horn for his pipe. And streamers of ribbons are right and bright.

If you dance the Morris in a real play "for company," you will like to have a fool-in-motley —known to us, in pictures, as a "King's Jester" or clown. He wears clothes in darts of two colors and is covered with little bells.

When you feel very gay indeed, act a scene on the green at Stratford-on-Avon and dance a Morris. Leap and jump and make all the noise you wish, just so it is a good, gay noise. The boys may even turn hand-springs.

The Morris is a very appropriate way to celebrate Twelfth Night.

THE MORRIS AND MAY-DAY

A later form of the Morris Dance was the May-Day Game.

You will enjoy acting it, for it is a Morris Dance full of characters that every child knows and loves.

Here are the actor-dancers, for every part must be acted as well as danced:

The May Lady or Queen
Robin Hood

EVERYONE WHO LOVETH MAY,
COME OUT AND DANCE WITH US TO-DAY!

Friar Tuck
Little John
Maid Marian, who sometimes takes the Queen's part.
Fool-in-motley.
Pipers
Morris Dancers in silver and gilt.

Besides these, to add to the fun, you may have the Hobby Horse and the Dragon.

For the Hobby Horse take one of those canes with hobby horse heads that Baby loves to "ride." Let one of the actors, "riding" it, caper and prance and dance.

For the Dragon, make a Dragon head and mask of green and red tissue paper, to put over the head of a dancer.

You will know how to dress the Queen of the May and Marian, the Nut-Brown Maid. The pictures in Robin Hood will tell you all about the costumes, if you want to have any.

This is a lovely and different May-Day celebration and is true to history.

If you have villagers with garlands of flowers to dance the May-pole, too, it will be still more beautiful.

MINUET

In the stately minuet
Dignity you'll not forget;
Lady fine and gallant gay
Bow and curtsey in the proper way.

In the stately minuet
Gracefully our steps are set;
Arch the arm and point the toe
Bow and curtsey very deep and low.

In the stately minuet
Ancient forms are lovely yet,
In the midst of modern plays
Bow and curtsey to the Olden Days.

MUSIC

Tunes that our Big Sister plays
  Are just the way the children love them.
O'er the keys her white hand strays
  Like a little bird above them.
Like a bird her notes are singing,
  Soft and sweet and good and gay,
Playful tunes; while they are ringing
  We could listen all the day.
In our minds come little pictures—
  Grassy fields and summer days,
And we hear the brooklets laughing
  In the tunes Big Sister plays.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Of course, Music and Acting go hand in hand. For both are ways of expressing our imaginings and letting others share in the loveliest of our thoughts.

We have spoken about Song and also of having musical accompaniment to the plays.

But now we want to consult about many ways in which children can "have music wherever they go," whether in the set plays or in the acting games we play just when we feel like it.

"REAL" MUSIC

Almost every group of children has a musical member—some child who can play the piano, violin, mandolin, banjo or guitar. Some groups are fortunate enough to be able to have a real orchestra of several pieces.

In these cases music may be played between the acts, during tableaux, statues, pantomimes, shadow-plays and masques, with the songs and dances, and gently during the action of speaking parts.

The players may play "off stage" or in the case of the smaller instruments, right in the play. Indeed, this is a charming thing to do.

In short, you may have music wherever it seems good to have it. Just have the music where the *play tells you.*

Only do, do be careful to play only such music —even between the acts—as suits the spirit of the play. You must feel that the music and the play are all part of the same thing.

When there are no children who can play instruments for us, we are, nevertheless, much better off than we used to be. For nowadays many homes have player-pianos by means of which the greatest pianoforte compositions may be produced by the little children, and phonographs and the like by which all musical instruments and the noblest songs are brought to our make-believe theater.

Even with these you must choose the selections carefully. Take records that are like the play. Be sure, as well, to use records with simple tunes that all children will understand and enjoy.

MAKESHIFT MUSIC

If we have no real musician in our little company—and even when we have—there are some instruments we can all play. These are not to

be slighted, either, humble as they are. For they may be used most successfully.

Pipes, whistles, trumpets, jew's-harps, harmonicas, sleigh bells, clapper bells, cymbals, triangles, ocarinas, combs-covered-with-tissue paper, dinner chimes, rattles, Turkish trombones, tambourines, drums, toy music boxes, castanets, —any child can play these. And they add to the fun and, if you use them thoughtfully, to the pleasure too.

ACTING MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS

Sometimes music describes something lovely or tells a story. The musical children or some musical grown person can help you find these compositions. Many of them are so simple that even Little Brother can follow their meaning, at least when it has been explained.

I know of no finer way to act a play—than to have these compositions played while you act out the description or the story in pantomime, tableau or speech.

We have already spoken together about how to interpret music in dance and in song.

I love to play as children played
  In very Long Ago,—
I love to be a greenwood maid
  And all the forest know;
I love to be a lady brave
  Who owns a noble knight,
And he would scorn his life to save
  But battles for the right.

You can hear the raindrops patter
  On the roof and windows too,
But we think it doesn't matter
  For we've something fine to do.
There's a big room in the attic,
  There's a chest of worn-out-clothes;
Mother says, since we're dramatic,
  Who cares how the weather goes!

REVELS

A Revel is a lot of fun. It is good for indoors on a rainy day, if Mother will consent to a good deal of noise and laughter.

Look through the things you have to "dress up in." Let each child choose some and decide what to represent. Then "dress" it as well as you can.

Act out your character through the whole time, by dance and action and song and word. It is very funny to see a whole roomful of children, each "dressed up" and acting something different.

You will have marches and games and dances, like those at any party, but you must not forget to act out your character, no matter what else you are doing.

One child should be chosen to decide on the games and marches and all that you do. He is called The Lord of Misrule.

PAGEANTRY

I often wish that I could see
The knights in gorgeous pageantry
Go through the forest green,
With all their pennants in the breeze
Like flowers 'mid the leafy trees—
The largest ever seen.
I'd see their armor shining bright
And lovely ladies, pink and white,
Who rode the ranks between.
And when we came to Arthur's court
I'd view the tourneys and the sport
Before the King and Queen.

PAGEANTS

I am glad to tell you about a splendid way to use everything we have learned so far.

Give a pageant.

There you may have tableaux, pantomime, statues, spoken plays, masques, color, song, dance, music, costuming, poetry, stories—and all in a parade besides.

For whether you present your pageant indoors or out-doors, it must move along like a procession.

You do not divide a pageant into acts as you do a play or even into scenes. You let it *pass by,* telling its story.

A pageant must be full of grace and color and beautiful groupings and the very best that you can do of everything that will please the eye and ear and spirit of the beholder.

I like out-door pageants the best, big ones in parks or flowery fields, little ones in gardens or playgrounds. But in winter, big pageants in school assembly rooms and little ones in homes are pleasant, too.

You choose the subject of your pageant, which may be a simple story or a bit of history, or a nature story, or a morality or a myth, or what you will. Then you develop it in moving scenes, groupings and dialogues and songs and dances, just as if a poem were to come to life and walk along before you.

Oh! It is a joyous thing to do.

I shall not tell you just how to present the pageant, because you know now, from what has gone before, how to perform all the parts that go towards making one. And I have told you the chief requirements—to have your pageant move along with grace and splendor.

But in a little while I shall outline one briefly, to give you some helpful points, if I can.

You must prepare for the pageant beforehand and be careful and thoughtful in making the simple costumes, in getting good color effects, in bringing in appropriate music, and in rehearsing faithfully.

You will wish to have guests to view your pageants—they are far too pleasing to be kept all to yourselves.

Though, of course, you can give little private ones too.

However, the best are those which delight the

most people, those to which the whole school, for instance, is invited.

The enthusiasm of large audiences helps a pageant. Because the best thing about one is its bigness and grandeur which make the children "lose themselves" and lets each one feel himself to be just a happy part of the whole big picture.

Here are just a few hints more to guide you in making the pageants.

AN OUT-DOOR PAGEANT

Let us imagine we are giving an out-door pageant representing *Phaeton Seeking the Sun.*

There is an open field or lawn before us, Nature's beautiful stage, with a background of good trees—if you are lucky enough to have them.

In front, the eager guests are grouped, seated on camp-chairs or on the grass, or standing.

The actors will come from behind the trees—or out of the house or through an arbor, or from whatever place is best for the location at hand.

You will require a bright sunny day to play *Phaeton.* For, as most of you know, he was the young son of Apollo, the Sun god, and went to seek his father when other children did not believe his claim of being the child of glorious, bright Apollo.

From beyond the trees, now come Greek boys

PHAETON SEEKING THE SUN

playing hand-ball. They make a pretty group. They may shout as boys do.

Phaeton lifts his arms to the Sun. He may sing to him or speak to him, if you like. Show in any way you please that he is proudly boasting of his wonderful parentage. Show in any way you please the other boys' envious taunts. They leave him and pass on. Phaeton sits or stands moodily thinking. Here come, perhaps, some little girls in yellow with floating scarfs. They are Sunbeams sent by Apollo. They cheer him and pass on. You may, if it seems good to you, have a group of Rain-clouds drive them away before them, blowing and whistling.

Phaeton's Mother, Clymene, daughter of the Sea, now comes to him. She is dressed in sea blues and greens. Shell-pink nymphs attend her.

A beautiful water-dance and song may be given for her.

Poor Phaeton cannot hide his tears. Of course, Clymene must learn the cause of them, just as anybody's mother would.

When she does learn it, she gives him permission to seek Apollo, pointing to the East where the Sun lives.

He starts slowly Eastward. There come toward him the guardians of the Sun's palace—

Summer Clouds, Sea Spray, Leafy Boughs—you will think of more.

Phaeton has to wrestle with Sea Storms—here's a chance for a good wrestling bout, boys! He has to climb over Great Gray Stones—more gymnastics—and refuses to be tempted by Pleasures.

At length he shades his eyes from the dazzling light and falls on his knees. Apollo comes! He is glittering, glorious! If you *could* manage to have him come in a chariot of gold it would be almost too good to be true.

Around him are the Day, the Month, the Year and the Hours. Spring is with him wearing flowers, Summer with grains, fruit-bearing Autumn and frosty Winter. You may have Gardeners with flowers and Poets with laurel branches, if you wish. And all may join in a stately dance,—each keeping "in character."

They clear a pathway through which Apollo advances.

Phaeton still shades his eyes. He cannot stand the glory. But a rainbow scarf is stretched over him. Under its protection he rises and goes to Apollo, who blesses and embraces him, while all about them join in an outburst of happy song.

INDOOR PAGEANTS

For indoor pageants you arrange your "stage" as I have already explained to you and merely give your story-procession indoors. While you will not now have Nature's help, you will have more opportunity to use your own cleverness of head and hand.

HISTORIC PAGEANTS

For indoors or in the open, History is a never-failing source of ideas and subjects for pageants.

You need not have all the proper historic costumes and surroundings, of course. Just a touch here and there to show the time and place will do. But you must be sure to have not a single thing that could not have belonged to that time and place.

Kings and Queens and courts and Indian and Pioneers are always interesting in a pageant. And acting history or seeing it acted is the easiest way to learn it.

AN ALICE PAGEANT

All Pageants need not be serious. Nonsense pageants are delightful for a change. And Alice in Wonderland is always sure to rejoice the heart of any audience, old or young.

SOME PAGEANT TITLES

(*You Will Think of Others for Yourselves.*)
Pageant of Honors.
Winning the West.
Boston Tea Party.
The Prince and the Pauper.
King Arthur and the Round Table.
Lives of Great Men.
Magic in Many Lands.
The Growth of Liberty.
The History of Our State.
A Fairy Tale.
The Growth of a Tree.
Hiawatha.
From Wheat-Grain to Bread.
The Water Babies.
The King of the Golden River.

Since I've been in a pageant,—a pleasant kind of play,
I seem to see my history in quite a bran-new way.
The people that we study are real, like you and me;
I've worn the dress of good Queen Bess from after school till tea!

FESTIVALS

We give Festivals to celebrate holidays or other important and pleasant events.

Plays and pageants and all the acting games are often merely part of the Festival celebrations. But, if they are well and merrily done, they make the whole festival better and richer.

In choosing the pageants or other plays for Festival use we must be sure to have the subject of the performance in keeping with the meaning of the day.

The May-Day Game described under Dance, following a Pageant of the Earth's awakening would make a good Festival for the First of May.

A Pageant of the History of Harvest Feasts, showing the harvest time thanksgiving of the world from ancient days until now, would be an interesting part of a Thanksgiving Festival. So would a Masque of National Blessings, or any play or pageant about our Pilgrim Fathers or about the Workers on farm and railroad and

factory who make for us the comforts for which we give thanks.

Pageants of the Lives of Washington and Lincoln or a Play about St. Valentine's Day would beautify a good February Festival.

For Christmas festivals there are so many fine things to act that a number of them will come to the mind of any child, without my telling.

"Acting out" the spirit of the days we celebrate is one of the wisest methods of enjoying them. A rousing Independence Day Festival will compensate many children for the loss of the fire-crackers, now becoming so unpopular with parents.

FAMILY FESTIVALS

Besides the Festivals celebrating the great holidays, we can have a lot of cheerful little ones in our family life.

Every Birthday can have its Festival and even other household happenings, as Sister's coming home from College or Brother's first appearance in long trousers.

These family plays can be made tender or funny. We can "bring in" all our family jokes and the little amusing incidents that make life such good fun.

Of course, everything about our Family Festi-

vals will be good-natured and loving. For of all the places for enjoying our acting and our celebrating and all the jolliest things we know, the dearest and happiest is in the heart of "the family."

May time,
Gay time,
Play time;
Spring is now awake!
Dance and sing
A posy ring
Act a masque of welcoming
For sweet Springtime's sake.

PROGRAM

We love to make things all ourselves
  Not like the ones you buy,
We get our scissors, pencils, paints
  And very hard we try.

Sometimes we chatter as we work,
  Sometimes we're just as still;
That's when we *must not* spoil it
  And are *so* afraid we will.

And when the work is finished
  Then it's Mother's turn to tell—
Oh! How we wait and tremble!—
  If she thinks we've done it well.

SNOW WHITE

A FAIRY-TALE PLAY

Snow White	a Princess
Queen Brangomar (a Witch)	her Stepmother
Florimond	a Prince
Berthold	a Huntsman
The Seven Dwarfs	

SCENES OF THE PLAY

I. Room in the Queen's Palace

II In the Forest

III The House of the Seven Dwarfs

IV In the Forest

V Room in the Queen's Palace

MAKING THE PROGRAMME

When programmes are needed you will find that home-made ones are the best. Of course, for the plays that you just make yourself as you go along, no programmes at all are necessary.

But when you give a play or a festival with invited guests, in a more formal way, you will find it pleasant to make the programmes pretty enough to be carried away as souvenirs.

If you keep them simple, I know you will say they are not at all hard to make. And the prettiest ones are always the simplest.

Correspondence cards, writing paper or water-color paper from the stationery stores and a box of water-color paints will be all that you need. Small stencils will be a great help if many programmes are to be painted, as they save time and labor. These can be found at the art stores too, but perhaps some clever-fingered child can cut out stencils for you. They are not hard and the drawing teacher at school will be delighted to show you how to make them.

Decorate your programmes appropriately for the play you are giving. Let them give the audience a hint of what to expect and thus they will put all minds in readiness for the play.

For the nature plays, a spray of flowers or a flock of birds in a border or a basket or some autumn leaves will be charming.

For story plays, some symbol of the tale might be chosen,—a slipper for Cinderella, a bell or a cat for Whittington, a Rabbit for Alice in Wonderland, a long-bow and arrow for Robin Hood. Your imagination will tell you just what to choose, if you let it.

Scenes from history may be beautifully treated on your programme.

Every country has a sign, some flower or animal or bird or tree that stands for it, besides its own flag, just as a class at school often has its flower. The symbols of the places in which your plays are supposed to take place are always good for the programmes.

The lilies of France, which are really our iris or flag lily, may be used for Henry of Navarre or Joan of Arc, or any great French story. The white plume is of course a sign of King Henry, too. Red and White Roses stand for England. The Thistle makes everyone think of Scottish Chiefs or the Lady of the Lake, or any good

Scotch tale or ballad. While, as the old rhyme has it,

"Everybody knows
Where the Shamrock grows."

For Hiawatha and all American Indian plays, use an eagle feather or a peace pipe. Many other signs of the red men will come to your minds,—to the boys' minds anyway.

For scenes of our Colonial days, a quaint tea pot is easy to paint.

For all plays in which Kings and Queens appear, whether history or fairy, a small gold crown at the top of the page is rich and stately.

Shadow-play programmes are very striking when the pictures on them are filled in solid with black ink. Such pictures look like shadows. They are called silhouettes.

Let the play itself tell you what to do.

When you write or print The List of Characters it is much better not to give the children's names at all. Just give the list of the characters they represent. Let it read:

Cinderella.....a maiden
Florizel.....a prince

and so on.

This will make the audience do just what you wish them to do if your play is to be a great

success. It will make them look at you and think of you as if you were really the people in the story and not your "truly" selves.

Besides it will show that every child in the play is thinking of the story and of the success of all,—and not separately of himself or herself.

PLAYERS' CLUBS

Children who enjoy acting and who love to work at this form of play and make all that they do artistic and fine and amusing and pleasant to do, to see and to hear, can have a good time in a club of their own.

They might call their club The Players—you see, that means not only people who act in plays but children at play, too.

For the best acting is only a splendid kind of child's play and the greatest actors have loved to be called The Players.

The Players could meet regularly and gather a real collection of properties, and learn to make better and better scenes and programmes and to give lovelier and lovelier plays and pageants of all sorts from the easiest to the greatest.

They could read together beautiful poems or stories that lend themselves to Players' purposes.

Then think what pleasure they could give to others, having pleasure themselves all the time!

And think how easily every occasion could be celebrated—just by playing!

If you will form a Players' Club—I know that Mother will let you—you will be glad. I'm sure you will be glad.

Never let the neighbors say
We disturb them with our play;
We can have our fun and joy
Yet do nothing to annoy.
Lovely things to hear and see
They enjoy as well as we.

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